

18 The Patriot Ledger Wednesday, December 18, 2002

Library binds itself to French counterpart

Partnership is one
of first of its kind

By ANNE TRAFTON
The Patriot Ledger

Visitors to the Duxbury Free Library shouldn't be surprised to notice a growing French influence in coming months.

The library has big plans to celebrate French culture as part of its new partnership with a library in Angers, a city

can Library of Paris.

The library caters to both Americans living in France and French citizens who want to practice their English and learn about American culture.

The Bibliothèque Américaine d'Angers, as it is known, offers book clubs and conversation groups in English. Eighty percent of its members are French.

The new partnership was initiated by Phoebe Marshall-Raimbeau, director of the Angers library.

Marshall-Raimbeau, an American who grew up in Somerville, married a

DUXBURY

in the Loire Valley.

The partnership is one of the first of its kind, according to Elaine Winquist, director of the Duxbury Free Library.

"We're kind of feeling our way," said Winquist, who majored in French in college. "My staff is really excited."

The official kickoff is scheduled next spring, but the library is already planning several French cultural activities.

The two libraries have set up a pen pal program for teens, via E-mail.

"I hope that our young patrons devel-

op on some kind of connection to people of similar ages living in Europe," Winquist said.

In March, Duxbury's poetry circle will focus on French poetry. The library also plans to add more French films to its collection.

To celebrate Bastille Day, the French celebration of independence on July 14, the library will offer a special summer reading program.

Duxbury's new sister library, the American Library of Angers, has one of France's largest collections of English books, second only to the Ameri-

can Library of Paris.

Winquist said. Winquist has never been to Angers but plans to visit the library in the spring. She hopes that the partnership will encourage other Duxbury residents to get to know the Loire Valley city, which is home to 146,000 residents and two universities.

"Duxbury is the kind of community where people travel overseas often," she said. "It would be wonderful for them to have a destination when they go to Europe."

Anne Trafton may be reached at atrafton@ledger.com.

French citizen and has lived in France for many years.

During a spring visit to the Boston area, Marshall-Raimbeau met with directors of several libraries in search of a partner for the Angers library. She eventually selected Duxbury.

Many of the Duxbury library's employees studied French in college and are eager to pick it up again, Winquist said. A retired French teacher who lives in Duxbury will come once a week to offer lessons to the staff.

"We're all rusty, so my staff said they'd love to have French lessons,"